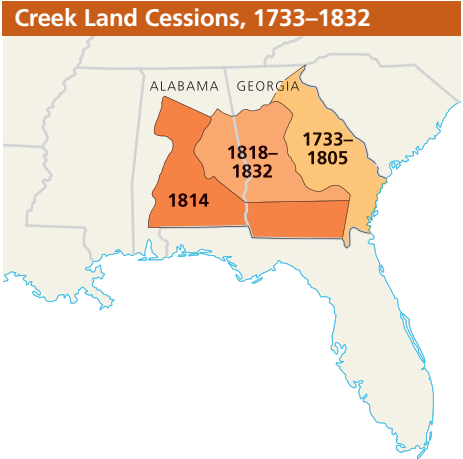


Horseshoe Bend

The Battle at Horseshoe Bend

In March 1814 General Jackson left Fort Strother and built a new fort, Fort Williams, farther south on the Coosa. Reinforced by Lower Creek and Cherokee allies and a regiment of U.S. infantry, Jackson's army marched out of Fort Williams, cutting a 52-mile trail through the forest in three days. On March 26, the army made camp six miles north of Horseshoe Bend. In the morning Jackson sent Brig. Gen. John Coffee and 700 mounted infantry plus 600 Cherokee and Lower Creek allies three miles downstream to cross the Tallapoosa and surround the bend. He took the rest of the army, 2,000 men from East and West Tennessee militia and the Thirty-ninth U.S. Infantry, into the peninsula. At 10:30 a.m. their artillery bombarded the Red Sticks' log barricade for two hours without effect.

At noon some of Coffee's Cherokees crossed the river and attacked the Red Sticks from the rear. Once aware of the



attack, Jackson quickly ordered a frontal assault that poured over the barricade. Fighting ranged over the peninsula's south end through the afternoon. By dark at least 800 of Chief Menawa's 1,000 Red Sticks were dead. Menawa was severely wounded but managed to escape.

Jackson's losses were 49 killed and 154 wounded, many of them mortally.

The Red Sticks suffered defeat at Tohopeka but many refused to surrender and joined the Seminoles in Florida. In August 1814 a delegation of Creek chiefs surrendered to Jackson at Wetumpka, near today's Montgomery, Ala. In the Treaty of Fort Jackson ending the conflict, Creeks ceded 23 million acres—nearly half their ancestral territory—to the United States. The state of Alabama, created from this land, joined the Union in 1819.

In 1828, partly for his fame from the battles of Horseshoe Bend and New Orleans, Andrew Jackson was elected president of the United States. Two years later he signed the Indian Removal Bill requiring southeastern tribes to move west of the Mississippi River to Indian Territory (Oklahoma), a journey the Cherokees called the "Trail of Tears."



"Gen. Andrew Jackson" at an annual March Battle Anniversary program.



The park's 1918 monument commemorating Horseshoe Bend carries the wrong date for the battle.



A Creek Stomp Dance demonstration at the annual March Battle Anniversary program.

About Your Visit

The park is on Ala. 49, 12 miles north of Dadeville and 18 miles north of Alexander City. Both towns offer restaurants and motels. The nearest camping is at Wind Creek State Park, six miles south of Alexander City. Campgrounds are also at Talladega National Forest and Mt. Cheaha State Park,

both 50 miles north of the park on Ala. 49. There is a picnic area at Horseshoe Bend.

A 3-mile loop road through the battlefield has trails and informative markers. A 2.8-mile nature trail through the battlefield begins at the Overlook parking lot.

To arrange flintlock musket demonstrations and group tours, contact the park.

A Junior Ranger program is offered for children 6–12 years old.

For Your Safety Please be alert to hazards like poisonous snakes, poison ivy,

and biting fire ants. Be cautious while boating or while walking near the riverbank. Watch children at all times.

Report all accidents or any hazards to park rangers, who are here to help you enjoy your visit.

More Information Horseshoe Bend National Military Park 11288 Horseshoe Bend Road Daviston, AL 36256; 256-234-7111 email hobe_Administration@nps.gov. www.nps.gov/hobe

Horseshoe Bend is one of over 390 parks in the National Park

System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit www.nps.gov.

Laws protect all natural and historical features. To disturb them is strictly prohibited.

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A Tour of the Park

Before you tour the battlefield, stop at the visitor center to see the 23-minute orientation film and museum exhibits about Creek culture, the Creek War, and the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.

Overlook Andrew Jackson's army arrived here about 10 a.m. on March 27, 1814. Brig. Gen. John Coffee's mounted infantry and Indian allies crossed the Tallapoosa about three miles downstream and encircled the "horseshoe" so the Red Sticks could not get help from other towns or escape by swimming the river. Jackson deployed his own militia and regulars across the field and placed his artillery on the hill to your right. Straight ahead, behind their log barricade (marked by the line of white stakes), 1,000 Red Stick warriors awaited Jackson's attack.

Note: This hill, called Cotton Patch Hill for its terraced cultivation before the park was created, is steep. Visitors with disabilities may find it difficult to climb. You can see the battlefield from Tour Stop 5 with no accessibility problem.

eight feet high & of remarkable compactness & strength . . . " It was "prepared with double rows of Port Holes well formed & skilfully arranged, [and] was of such a figure that an Army could not approach it, without being exposed to a cross fire." Just before the battle, Jackson placed two small cannon here, a 3-pounder and a 6-pounder, trained on the barricade. About 10:30 a.m., he "opened a brisk fire upon its centre; but altho the balls which passed through, killed several of the enemy, they were not dispersed, nor was any important damage done to the works." Finally, at 12:30 p.m., Jackson ordered a frontal attack of the Creek position. Surging forward, his troops quickly overran the barricade and, after vicious hand-to-hand fighting, drove the Red Sticks down the peninsula toward Coffee's mounted infantry and Indian allies. "The event could no longer be in doubt," Jackson would later write. "The enemy altho many of them fought to the last with the kind of bravery desperation inspires, were at last entirely routed and cut to pieces. The whole margin of the river which surrounded the peninsula was strewn with the slain."

river" to the barricade then under attack by Jackson's militia and regulars. Coffee also said that "attempts to cross the river at all points of the bend were made by the enemy but not one escaped, very few ever reached the bank, and those were killed the very instant they landed."

- 1 The Island** On March 27, Coffee ordered 40 men of Lt. Jesse Bean's Tennessee militia company to occupy this 15-acre island. Their mission was to prevent Red Stick warriors seeking refuge there. Many Creeks did attempt to escape to the island but were "sunk by Lt. Bean's command ere they reached the bank."
- 2 The Barricade** The log breastwork the Red Sticks built across the peninsula was, Jackson wrote, "eighty-poles in length, from five to

- 3 Cherokee Crossing** The Red Sticks gathered in the "horseshoe" hoped the encircling river would protect them from Jackson's attack. But Jackson surrounded the bend with his allied warriors, who, led by a Cherokee named Whale, launched a surprise rear attack into Tohopeka village. The warriors crossed the river in canoes stolen from the Creeks, Coffee said, "advanced into the village & very soon drove the enemy up from the bank of the

- 4 Tohopeka Village** Tohopeka (meaning fort or fortification) was a temporary Red Stick village begun several months before the battle. The warriors' families wintered here in crude log huts while the men built the barricade across the peninsula. The women and children stayed here during the battle. The Cherokees burned Tohopeka during their assault on the Red Sticks' position. After the fighting ended, 350 Red Stick women and children were taken prisoner. A short trail leads to the overlook shelter.

- 5 Newyaucau Town and the Aftermath** This Upper Creek town, across the river to the northeast, was named for the 1790 Treaty of New York guaranteeing Creek lands and perpetual friendship with the United States. The Georgia militia under Maj. Gen. David Adams burned it before the battle, and, and its people joined the other refugees at Tohopeka.

After the battle the surrounding land and much of east-central Alabama remained Creek. This area was not ceded to the United States under the Treaty of Fort Jackson, and Creek people continued to live here until the 1830s. Starting in 1836 the U.S. Army forcibly removed over 19,000 Creeks from Alabama.

